

Message Text

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ORIGIN OES-06

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 COME-00 CG-00 DOTE-00

INT-05 SSO-00 IO-13 NSF-02 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

INRE-00 SS-15 PM-04 /075 R

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ARA - MR. KEANE

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMCONSUL BELEM IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL BELIZE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BOGOTA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CARACAS IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL CURACAO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL HAMILTON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL MARACAIBO IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL MERIDA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MEXICO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY NASSAU IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PANAMA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

COMDT COGARD WASHDC

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NMCC WASHDC

CNO
SAN JUAN SARCOORD SAN JUAN PR
COMLANTAREA COGARD NY
COMNAVFORCARIB ROOS RDS PR
CCGDSEVEN MIAMI

UNCLAS STATE 205352

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TGEN, XL, NOAA

SUBJECT: TIDAL WAVE WARNING

1. STORIES HAVE BEEN CIRCULATING THAT THE ERUPTION OF LA SOUFRIERE ON GUADELOUPE MIGHT GENERATE A TIDAL WAVE (PROPERLY KNOWN AS TSUNAMI OR SEISMIC SEA WAVE) IN AREA. THIS IS NOT PROBABLE DUE TO ERUPTION ITSELF. HOWEVER, IF ERUPTION IS SO COMPLEX OR EXTENSIVE THAT IT IS ACCOMPANIED BY UNDERSEA EARTHQUAKE OR RESULTS IN SEA FLOOR DISPLACEMENT, PROBABILITY OF TSUNAMI BECOMES GOOD. LIKE-LIHOOD OF UNDERSEA QUAKE IN CONNECTION WITH LA SOUFRIERE ERUPTION UNKNOWN, BUT PRELIMINARY INDICATION IS THAT IT UNLIKELY.

2. SINCE TSUNAMIS TRAVEL AT APPROXIMATELY 500 MPH, AND THERE IS NO ESTABLISHED WARNING SYSTEM IN ATLANTIC AS THERE IS IN PACIFIC, THERE MAY BE LITTLE OR NO WARNING IF TSUNAMI DOES OCCUR. THUS, BEST PRECAUTION IS TO AVOID LOW-LYING COASTAL AREAS FACING GUADELOUPE IF POSSIBLE UNTIL DANGER OF MAJOR ERUPTION OVER OR BETTER SCIENTIFIC INFO AVAILABLE.

3. IF TSUNAMI WARNING IS RECEIVED OR RPT OR NEWS RECEIVED OF UNDERSEA QUAKE IN CONNECTION WITH ERUPTION, EVACUATION OF LOW-LYING COASTAL AREAS MUST BE CONDUCTED IMMEDIATELY AND CONTINUED UNTIL ALL DANGER IS PAST. THERE IS NO RPT NO OTHER EFFECTIVE MEANS OF COPING WITH TSUNAMI. RECEDING WATER WILL OCCUR BEFORE TSUNAMI STRIKES, AND IS IMMEDIATE RPT IMMEDIATE DANGER SIGN.
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DURATION OF EVACUATION IMPOSSIBLE TO STATE, DUE TO LACK OF ELABORATE PREDICTION SYSTEM AS IN PACIFIC. PERIOD DEPENDS BOTH ON DISTANCE FROM QUAKE SITE AND EXACT SPEED OF TSUNAMI, THE LATTER DEPENDING ON SEVERAL FACTORS. THUS EVACUATION SHOULD CONTINUE UNTIL ALL DANGER PAST, PERHAPS AS MUCH AS FOUR OR FIVE HOURS. GIVEN POTENTIAL TREMENDOUS FORCE OF TSUNAMIS AND THEIR SUDDENNESS OF ARRIVAL, IT IS BETTER TO ERR ON SAFE SIDE.

4. DEPT HAS SUGGESTED TO NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION (NOAA) THAT POSSIBILITY SHOULD BE STUDIED OF CREATING AD HOC TSUNAMI WARNING NET (EVEN IF PRIMITIVE) BY TYING IN CONSTANTLY MONITORED TIDE GAGES WITH REGIONAL METEOROLOGICAL NET. SUDDEN DROP OR INCREASE IN WATER LEVEL COUPLED WITH KNOWLEDGE OF ERUPTION WOULD SIGNAL TSUNAMI. NOAA IS LOOKING INTO THIS. NOAA CONSIDERS POSSIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING AD HOC WARNING SYSTEM REMOTE. NOAA IS ALSO CHECKING WITH TSUNAMI EXPERTS IN HONOLULU FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, BUT PRECISE INFO ON TSUNAMIS IN ATLANTIC IS SCANT. IF SUITABLE TIDE GAGES EXIST, ARRANGEMENTS WILL HAVE TO BE MADE BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES FOR MONITORING AND GETTING WARNING ON METEOROLOGICAL NET.

5. THIS NOTICE IS A PRECAUTION ONLY. DEPT WILL INFORM POSTS WHEN FURTHER INFO BECOMES AVAILABLE (EXPECTED 8/19/76). POSTS SHOULD INITIATE NO ACTION ON ABOVE INFORMATION UNTIL RECEIVING FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS FROM DEPT OTHER THAN PRECAUTIONS POST MAY FEEL DESIRABLE FOR SAFETY OWN PERSONNEL AND FACILITIES, BASED ON PROXIMITY TO LOU-LYING COASTAL AREA AND DISTANCE FROM GUADELOUPE. POSTS MAY PASS ABOVE INFORMATION TO HOST GOVERNMENTS IF REQUESTED. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, NATURAL DISASTERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 AUG 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE205352
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: WLSULLIVAN:MJB
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: I
Film Number: D760317-0355
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760841/aaaabjqv.tel
Line Count: 139
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN OES
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 31 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <31 MAR 2004 by ReddocGW>; APPROVED <18 JAN 2005 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TIDAL WAVE WARNING
TAGS: TGEN, SENV, XL, BR, FW, NOAA
To: BELEM
BELIZE
MULTIPLE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006